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Newsletter

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

GRADUATE SCHOOL ★ USDA

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TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE!

With the beginning of the 1946 Fall Semester the Department of Agriculture GS completed a quarter-century dedicated to improvement of the Federal service and the increasing of employee usefulness. The occasion brought many statements and messages of congratulations. Wrote President Truman to Secretary Anderson: "The Graduate School has proved to be one of our most significant and productive instruments for better government". A Secretarial Memorandum issued on 17 September 1946 stated "...It would be impossible to assess how much the Graduate School has meant to the development of the Department. We know that its role has been a broad and vital one as regards both agencies and programs and employee morale and influence".

Heads of federal departments and agencies, and many others too, also sent messages of appreciation. One Cabinet member wrote as follows: "For twenty-five years representatives of this Department have participated in the development and operation of the Department of Agriculture Graduate School as committee members, instructors and in many other ways....It is no wonder, then, that in extending to you our congratulations....we feel we may share with you a pride in the growth of this significant institution. We shall depend on the Agriculture Graduate School....in the years to come, and we shall continue to work shoulder to shoulder with you to this end".

TAKING STOCK!

Committee members and faculty will find interesting three current surveys aimed basically at an evaluation of how accurately GS Committees are interpreting educational needs, and how effectively course programs are meeting these.

The first of these is a survey of student opinions, based on a questionnaire handed every GS student during the week of 13 January. The survey was developed to determine how effectively the course achieves objectives set out for it in the Bulletin, what emphases should be added or deleted, organization of the class, its teaching, etc. Instructors issued the questionnaire which was returned in a sealed envelope by the student. The student questionnaire originated in the Department of Office Techniques and Operations and originally was devised by the Committee on Clerical and Administrative Procedure, chaired by Henry Donovan, as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of the Committee's reorganization last year of its course program. The questionnaire (prepared by F. P. Brassor of CSC) appeared to be such an effective stock-taking device that it was applied to the entire GS program. Results will prove extremely valuable to committees and instructors and will be available about 15 February on the basis of courses, divisions and departments. The data on a GS-wide basis will appear in the next issue of this sheet.

The second survey is that being made by the Beltsville GS Committee and is discussed in more detail elsewhere in this sheet. The third, perhaps not technically a survey, will have been noticed by instructors as part of the spring semester registration record. Provision was made, through various alterations, for the student to indicate his primary reason for registration (i.e., credit for Ph.D. or M.A., improve performance in present job, etc.). The results will be helpful in program planning.

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DR. A. F. WOODS RETIRES

On December 31st, that Grand Old Man of the GS and of Agriculture generally, Dr. A. F. Woods, retired, after more than 50 years service to Agriculture. He is doing research work with his son at the University of Maryland, on the origin of the filterable virus.

Dr. Woods made significant contributions to Agriculture in the fields of Research, Administration and Education. He held many distinguished posts including Dean of Minnesota College of Agriculture, President of the University of Maryland, Director of Scientific Work in the Department of Agriculture, Director of the GS from 1926 to 1940 and Director Emeritus and Educational Adviser from that date. More than any other one person he is responsible for the development of the USDA Graduate School.

The GS Staff, Instructors and all who have worked with and know Dr. Woods unite in wishing him success and continued good health in his new position.

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FALL REGISTRATION ABOVE 4100

The fall semester program of the Graduate School was the largest on record in terms of registration and number of classes; the total course registration was in excess of 4100 while more than 160 different classes were conducted during the semester. At the request of a number of agencies special classes were organized and held in their buildings, including the Naval Ordnance Laboratory, Naval Research Laboratory and the Bureau of Ships.

ANDERSON ON

PUTTING AGRICULTURAL POLICIES INTO PRACTICE

The SRO sign had to be hung out for Secretary Anderson's talk on January 20 on putting agricultural policies into practice. The Secretary's stimulating talk concluded a series on social and economic implications of current agricultural policy held from 4:30-5:30 p.m. during the fall in the Agricultural Auditorium and open to all agricultural officials. Other leaders who spoke in the series, and their topics, included: John D. Black, Harvard University ("Economic Influence of Agricultural Controls on Agriculture"); Judge Marvin Jones, Chief Justice U. S. Court of Claims ("How Farm Policies are Made"); Msgr. Ligutti, National Catholic Rural Life Conference ("Rural Community and National Economy"); T. W. Schultz, University of Chicago ("Agriculture's Dependence on Other Segments of the Economy"); and Chester C. Davis, President, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis ("Land Use and Conservation").

The above speakers, together with other leaders in agricultural and related fields, including D. A. Fitzgerald (IEFC), Harry D. White (Inter. Stab. Fund), H. R. Wellman (Univ. of California) and others, also met with the evening seminar (716) which studied the same topic in more detail under the leadership of William A. Minor, T. Roy Reid and Robert H. Shields.

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CHANGES IN GS ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Because most faculty members and many committee members are already familiar with the fact we shall merely note here for others these two changes:

Frank Scanlin. Mr. Scanlin, fresh from three years in the army and from civilian employment with both War and Navy, joined the Staff in the fall. He is in charge of informational and library services and, he is Editor of this sheet. Call him on RE 4142, Ext. 4419 if you have ideas or problems.

Ruth O. Carlock, who has been with the Business Office since 1944, was promoted last fall to the position of Office Manager. Her extension is 6337.

At long last Mr. T. Swann Harding reports that his publisher assures him that his newest book "Two Blades of Grass" will be out in February. Two Blades of Grass presents a review of the scientific work of the Department with short biographical sketches of some of the earlier workers. Mr. Harding is known to all USDA workers as the most capable editor of USDA; a scientist who has turned writer.

The Graduate School will take orders for those who wish to purchase a copy of Two Blades of Grass. We are sure that Mr. Harding can be persuaded to autograph these books. Call Mr. Frank Scanlin, Ext. 4419 if you wish to order a copy.

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BELTSVILLE COMMITTEE STUDIES NEEDS THERE

What are the educational needs, interests and problems of the more than 2000 USDA employees at Beltsville? How can bureaus bring to focus all available resources within and outside the Department in meeting them? These are the objectives of the Beltsville Graduate School Committee, appointed by the Director in August 1946. Following its first meeting on 5 September 1946, the committee placed in the hands of each Beltsville employee a memorandum stating its objective, indicating that with reference to the fall semester each member was prepared to advise with employees in his bureau as to educational opportunities available in the Washington area, and sketching its ground plan.

The committee has under way a survey, which will reach every Beltsville employee, to identify educational interest of employees at all levels. It plans to translate results into a program beginning with next fall. R. E. Hodgson, Assistant BDI Chief, is Chairman of the Committee. Other members are: George Irving, Jr. (AIC); Elsa O. Keiles (HNHE); C. A. Logan (ARC); A. H. Moseman (PISAE); R. G. Schott (BAI); Joseph Snyder (SCS); J. F. Yeager (EPQ) and C. A. Cary (BDI).

GS Departmental Committees are now at work on the 1947-48 program. Committee members have asked that we invite the readers of the Newsletter to send in their suggestions and comments as to new courses which might be offered; desirable changes in the present program; in fact, any suggestion which will enable the GS to meet more effectively the needs of federal workers.

Send your suggestions to the Graduate School office. The 1947-48 Bulletin goes to the printer about April. This request for suggestions holds also for the summer program. Send these in by March 1, please.

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EXTENSION EVALUATION FOR STATE LEADERS

Extension Service and GS are jointly sponsoring a two-week (Feb. 24 - Mar. 7) conference (700. Basic Evaluation Adapted to Extension Teaching) of state extension leaders, involving the steps and techniques in adapting principles of evaluation to Extension field studies. Some 30 state leaders are expected to come to Washington to participate in this conference, under the leadership of Extension's Sabrosky and such specialists as Tyler and Leagens of the University of Chicago.

Another interesting Extension course got underway with the opening of the spring semester and will continue to August. Under Gladys Gallup and specialists, Extension and a few related workers will study (701) research methods and techniques as applied to Extension Work.

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EARTH SCIENCE CONFERENCE IN FEBRUARY

Under the sponsorship of the National Research Council and the GS, a one-day conference will be held in February of representatives of federal agencies with activities in these fields, and members of the GS Department of Physical Sciences. Purpose of the conference: To consider ways and means

by which through the GS the invaluable research and experience resources in geology and geography in Government can be made available on an organized basis to universities specializing in those fields, and by which geologists and geographers in Washington can continue study in professional fields during their employment.

The Committee planning the conference consists of Dr. Arthur Bevan, Chairman, Division of Geology and Geography, NRC; Mr. S. W. Boggs, Special Adviser on Geography, Department of State; Dr. Rollin S. Atwood, Ass't. Chief, American Republican Research, Department of State; Dr. W. H. Bradley, Chief Geologist, U. S. Geological Survey; Mr. W. W. Rubey, Staff Geologist, U. S. Geological Survey and Dr. Charles E. Kellogg Chief, Division of Soil Survey, U.S.D.A.

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PENICILLIN AND STREPTOMYCIN

*A talk on the synthesis of penicillin by the discoverer of the process, Vincent du Vigneaud, Head of the Department of Biochemistry at Cornell University Medical College, climaxed on January 30th a seminar which gained national attention. Organized by BAIC's Horace T. Herrick and George W. Irving, Jr., the seminar (700. Progress in the Field of Antibiotics) brought to Washington the nation's outstanding authorities in the field of antibiotics, including Chester S. Keefer of Boston, known generally as the "Czar" of penicillin and streptomycin since he has been in charge of the Government's allocation of these drugs; Rene J. Dubbs of the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research; S. A. Waksman of the New Jersey State Agricultural Experiment Station, and the discoverer of streptomycin; Kenneth B. Raper of Agriculture's Northern Regional Laboratory, and many another authority from the Department, industry and the medical professions.

A flood of inquiries has deluged GS. You can help if you tell inquirers that a volume incorporating this unique series, the first in this field, should be published by late Spring.

SERVICE TO VETERANS

About 20% of GS registration consists of veterans using the certificate of entitlement. Though constituting a smaller proportion of the student body than in many other institutions, the group is nevertheless a sizeable one. To facilitate handling the procedure involved, two counselors representing Veterans Administration were present during registration, speeding up the process considerably. To broaden the service the GS arranged to have these representatives advise not only GS applicants, but any veteran employed in Agriculture and interested in enrollment at any institution.

Representatives of agencies dealing with the rights and benefits granted the veteran have found helpful a special course "640. Veterans Legislation and Administration", given last fall and again this spring by Frank A. Petrie and other officials of Veterans Administration.

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NEW APPOINTMENTS TO GS ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Hugh H. Bennett, Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, I. W. Duggan, Governor of Farm Credit Administration and W. V. Lambert, Research Administrator, have been appointed to the GS General Administration Board by Secretary Anderson. They replaced Robert H. Shields, former PMA Administrator, P. V. Cardon, formerly Research Administrator and Robert W. Hudgens, former FHA Associate Administrator. Earlier in September, Oris V. Wells, BAE Chief and M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension had been appointed to vacancies caused by retirement of James T. Jardine, Office of Experiment Station Chief and A. R. Tolley, BAE Chief.

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AS TO THIS SHEET--

Have you suggestions for its improvement? Are there any items you wish to be included in the next issue? If so, please call the Editor (Frank Scanlin, Ext. 4419)-- he will be glad to hear from you.